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Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Letter dated 14 March 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the President of the Human Rights Council

I would like to refer to the letter dated 29 January 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the President of the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/25/G/5). That letter is nothing but another attempt by the Azerbaijani propaganda machine to distort reality and to distract the attention of the international community from the blatant, continuous violations of the ceasefire by Azerbaijan itself.

Completely ignoring its own commitments under the ceasefire agreement concluded on a trilateral basis in 1994, as well as the calls by the international community on the sides to commit themselves to the Olympic Truce during the Winter Olympics and the Paralympics in Sochi, Russian Federation, Azerbaijani armed forces target Armenian positions and settlements on a daily basis along the line of contact between Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijan and the Armenian-Azerbaijani State border.

Since January 2014, the Azerbaijani side has fired incessantly in the direction of the villages of the Tavush region of the Republic of Armenia, inflicting firearm wounds on civilians. There was a serious escalation of the situation on the line of contact as a result of attempted infiltrations by the Azerbaijani military into the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. Since 20 January, such Azerbaijani provocations have led to two casualties in the ranks of the Defence Army of Nagorno-Karabakh and numerous casualties on the Azerbaijani side.

I would also like to draw your attention to the data below on violations of the ceasefire regime by Azerbaijan on the line of contact with the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic and along the Armenia-Azerbaijan border recorded during January 2014, provided respectively by the Ministries of Defence of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic and the Republic of Armenia.

1. On the line of contact between Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijan

Total number of violations: 2,750

Total number of shots: 22,446

AK Kalashnikov rifle: 17,078

PK Kalashnikov machine gun: 3,834

SVD 7.9 mm sniper weapon: 926

DSHK 12.7 mm machine gun: 191

RPK 5.45 mm machine guns: 128

Black arrow 12.7 mm sniper weapon: 85

Istigall 14.5 mm machine gun: 161

Utyos 12.7 mm machine gun: 40

NSVP 12.7 mm machine gun: 3

2. On the border of the Republic of Armenia

Total number of violations: 363

Total number of shots: 10,457

AK Kalashnikov rifle: 1,125

PK Kalashnikov machine gun: 5,715

SVD 7.9 mm sniper weapon: 141

DSHK 12.7 mm machine gun: 3,391

RPK 5.45 mm machine gun: 12

Black arrow 12.7 mm sniper weapon: 56

Istigall 14.5 mm machine gun: 9

NSVP 12.7 mm machine gun: 8

On 18 February 2014, the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed a letter to the Secretary-General, providing detailed information on the above-mentioned violations (A/68/760–S/2014/110).

Such systematic abuses by Azerbaijan of the principles of international law, namely, the non-use of force and the threat of use of force, seriously endanger regional peace and security. This is particularly disconcerting in the context of the recent military threats by Azerbaijan and the most recent belligerent statements made by the leaders of Azerbaijan, jeopardizing the peace process mediated by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Minsk Group Co-Chairs.

The above-mentioned gives solid ground to conclude that the actions of certain Azerbaijani detachments are either not properly subject to a chain of command or that these provocations are deliberately intended to destabilize the situation in the region.

I would like once again to stress the importance of complying with the 1994 ceasefire and 1995 ceasefire strengthening agreements, as well as of implementing the proposals to withdraw snipers and to create an investigative mechanism on ceasefire violations. Clear and unequivocal commitment to the ceasefire and confidence-building by the parties concerned will definitely serve as a crucial factor in creating a conducive environment for the peace process as much as every death of a soldier or a civilian on the line of contact between Nagorno-Karabakh and Azerbaijan and on the State border between Armenia and Azerbaijan will create new serious predicaments towards that end.

I would appreciate it if you could circulate the present letter as a document of the twenty-fifth session of the Human Rights Council under the agenda item 4.

(*Signed*) Charles Aznavour

Ambassador, Permanent Representative